



THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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FOREIGN FLIGHT SUSPENSION EXTENDED TILL AUGUST 31

The Centre on Friday said suspension of scheduled flights to and from the country has been stretched till August-end

SERVICES UNDER TRAVEL BUBBLES TO GO ON

Flights operating under the 'Travel Bubble' agreements that India has signed with the US, France, and Germany won't be affected. The restrictions won't apply also to international all-cargo flights. Suspension of foreign flight operations that began in late March was to end on Friday. It was extended in light of the mounting Covid-19 cases in the country

MORE AGREEMENTS IN THE MAKING: GOVT

India is in talks with the UK to set up a travel bubble under which two flights will operate between Delhi and London daily. The Centre on Friday indicated it has reached a deal with Kuwait. "More such arrangements are likely to fructify and ease people's movements from different countries," the government said

7.5 lakh

INDIAN BUDGET HOME UNDER
THE VANDANA BHARAT MISSION

Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Department
Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department

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Shri B. S. Yediyurappa
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt of Karnataka

MAGAZINE ANNOUNCEMENT

Starting August 2, the Sunday Magazine brings you three new astrology columns by A Tora, Sundar Balakrishnan and Meenakshi Chawla

— Editor

EXPRESS READ

Vijayendra is BJP state vice-president

Bengaluru: BJP state president Nalin Kumar Kateel on Friday announced his new team of office-bearers. While Kateel has retained many incumbents, CM Yediyurappa's son B Y Vijayendra has been elevated as the party state unit's VP. P7

AP's three-capital bills get Gov's assent

Amaravati: Clearing legislative hurdle to Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy's plan to have three capitals for Andhra Pradesh, Governor Biswa Bhushan Harichandan on Friday gave his nod for the same. P7

Valmiki's get domicile certificates in JK

Jammu: Sixty three years after their arrival in Jammu and Kashmir as "sanitary workers" on the request of the then government, members of the Valmiki community are finally being granted domicile certificates.



Mehbooba's detention extended

FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

THE Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday extended the detention of PDP chief and former J&K Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti under the Public Safety Act (PSA) by three more months. At the same time, as an Eid gift, Peoples Conference chairman and former minister Sajjad Gani Lone was set free from house detention days before he was to complete a year-long detention. J&K Principal Secretary Home Shaleen Kabra, in an order, on Friday extended PSA detention of Mehbooba by three more months.

Her PSA detention was expiring on August 5. She has been under detention since the Centre's dilution of Article 370 in August last year. She was initially lodged at Cheshma Shahi hut and then shifted to government accommodation at Maulana Azad Road. She is the only mainstream leader still in detention under PSA. P10

Core output -ve for 4th month

Eight sectors post 15% contraction in June against 22% in May, showing feeble recovery

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

DESPITE relaxation in lockdown measures, output of the eight core industries contracted 15% in June. However, the latest dip has a silver lining as it is lower than that of the previous two months — 22% contraction in May and 37% in April, signalling uneven recovery in manufacturing activity.

According to economists, the improvement was mainly because of relaxation in lockdown and improvement in economic activities. Industrial activity is expected to pick up pace going forward with more relaxations coming into play.

"The slightly positive factor is that the decline in growth has improved," said Madan Sabnavis, chief economist, CARE Ratings.

Performance of the core industries — electricity, steel, refinery products, crude oil, coal, cement, natural gas and fertilisers — is crucial as they account for 40.27% in the Index

of Industrial Production (IIP). So, any contraction in core sector output will also drag down the IIP numbers.

Sector-wise data showed all sectors, barring fertilizers, showed negative growth, with the steel sector showing the steepest contraction at 33%. Coal contracted by 15.5%, natural gas by 12%, electricity 11% and crude oil 6%, while refinery products, which weigh 28.02% of the IIP, witnessed an 8.9% contraction.

However, cement production showed sharp improvement from 85.3% contraction recorded in May to a negative growth of 6.9% in June. This shows improvement in construction activities, a key indicator of improving infra activities.

However, not all are as optimistic. "With virus cases still rising, many restrictions will remain for an extended period. The upshot is that the recovery in Indian industry is likely to be slow and bumpy," said Darren Au, Asia economist at Capital Economics.

TV Import curb will
promote local
manufacturing:
Experts

New Delhi: The Centre's plan to restrict imports of TV sets will boost domestic manufacturing and cut dependence on Chinese imports, industry analysts said. "India can emerge as the next hub for manufacturing TVs not only for the Indian markets but also for the global market. This step is definitely in the right direction and will help in creating a global hub, which we want to be," Dicon Technologies Chairman Sunil Vachani said | P10



MSMEs can't be refused
credit under emergency
credit facility

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said banks cannot refuse credit to MSMEs under the emergency credit facility and any refusal should be reported. "If refused, such instances must be reported," she said, adding the govt is working with the RBI on need for restructuring of loans to help industry tide over Covid impact | P10

Fiscal deficit widens to 83% of Budget estimate

ANURADHA SHUKLA @ New Delhi

WITH lockdown measures badly hitting the government's revenue collection and expenditure shooting through the roof, India's fiscal deficit widened to ₹6.62 lakh crore in the April-June quarter, accounting for 83.2% of the target for the whole financial year. The deficit is unusually high for a quarter, say experts.

"Our baseline estimate is that the fiscal deficit will surge to ₹13 lakh crore in FY21 from the budgeted level of ₹8.0 lakh crore. This anticipated fiscal slippage, even in our base case scenario, exceeds the extent by which the Centre's market borrowings have already been increased," said Aditi Nayar, principal economist at ICRA.

As expected, revenue collection remained subdued. Data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) on Friday revealed that the net tax receipts were ₹1.35 lakh crore, compared to ₹2.51 lakh crore in the same period last year. For the quarter, tax revenues were at 8% of the full year target of ₹16.35 lakh crore, while non-tax revenues were at only 4% of the full year target of ₹3.85 lakh crore.

ICRA has predicted the net tax revenues of the Centre, non-tax revenues and disinvestment proceeds to together trail the budgeted level by more than ₹6 lakh crore. CONTINUED ON: P12

Low virus deaths due to location?

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA
@ New Delhi

INDIA'S Covid-19 mortality rate of 2.2% and its comparatively low number of deaths per million people have puzzled scientists and researchers the world over.

Now, some of the country's top cancer doctors say they have found a biological explanation for it.

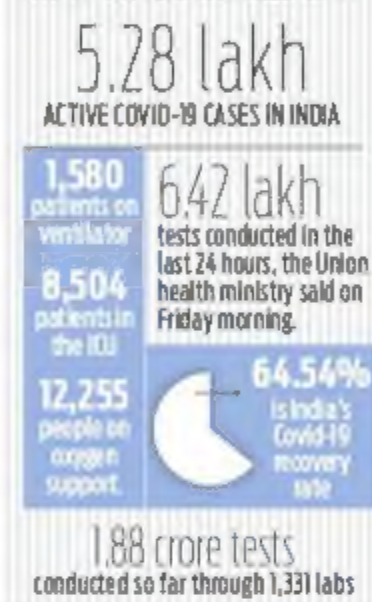
Doctors at the Tata Memorial Centre (TMC) in Mumbai proposed that the lower incidence of deep vein blood clots in warmer areas and those closer to the equator may help understand India's relatively low mortality rate.

Their study, published in the ICMR's Indian Journal for Medical Research, points out that death per million in India, which stands at 25 as of Friday, is considerably lower than most other countries. For instance, it is 849 in Belgium, 679 in the UK and 470 in the United States.

Also, India's mortality rate of 2.2% (meaning 2.2 deaths per hundred positive cases) stands in contrast to the UK's 15.2%, Italy's 14.2% and Spain's 10%. The global fatality rate is around 3.8%.

Multiple studies from China, Europe and the US have linked blood clots in deep veins to Covid-19 deaths. Researches from various other countries have identified venous thromboembolism (VTE)—a condition in which

COVID STATUS REPORT



a blood clot forms in the deep veins—as an important cause of poor gaseous exchange and death in Covid-19 patients.

Studies have also found D-dimer—a small protein fragment present in the blood after a blood clot is an important predictor of death. The doctors at TMC, however, have shown indirect evidence for a lower incidence of VTE from India.

Less than 5 in more than 20,000 women who receive tamoxifen—an anti-breast cancer drug—at the TMC annually, develop clots—a known complication of this drug.

The doctors say there's no need for widespread anxiety over the disease and suggested that strict lockdowns are not necessary.

FARM FARE With more hands on fields, state sees more sowing

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @Bengaluru

THE Covid-induced lockdown, which saw reverse migration to the hinterland, coupled with good monsoon rains, has had a positive effect which is showing on the fields. There has been an increase in sowing activity across the state in the prevailing kharif season.

As per the data from the State Agriculture Department, cultivable land in the state is 73 lakh hectares of which close to 50 lakh hectares has already been covered under sowing, meeting 68 per cent of the target. The state is in the second month of the monsoon season and the officials are confident that in the next couple of weeks, they will exceed the targeted sowing area. Last year, up to July end, sowing was completed in 44.99 lakh hectares whereas five lakh more hectares have been covered this year.

CONTINUED ON: P5

Kamal Pant is new B'uru police chief

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), State Intelligence, Kamal Pant has been appointed as the new Bengaluru City Police Commissioner. He replaces the incumbent top cop and his batchmate Bhaskar Rao. Both officers are of the 1990 batch of the Indian Police Service. Pant hails from Uttarakhand.

The New Indian Express had first reported about the change of guard a day before the government appointed Pant as City police commissioner. Pant is not new to Bengaluru. He was posted as Additional Commissioner of Police (law and order) in 2014, under the then police commissioner Raghav-

endra H Auradkar.

Known to be a tough officer with impeccable service credentials, Pant has handled some sensitive assignments during his tenure. After his stint in the City between 2013-14, he was posted as ADGP-Prisons, during which time he headed the Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed to probe the internal

corruption in the Lokayukta.

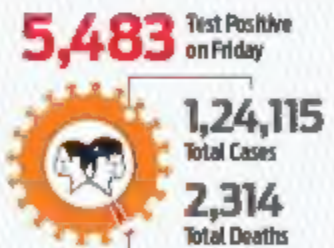
Pant has also served as the ADGP, Karnataka State Reserve Police (KSRP), and was member of the Auradkar Committee, which was constituted in 2016 by the then Congress CM Siddaramaiah to address pay and allowances-related issues of the Group-C police personnel. Pant was posted as ADGP-Intelligence last August.



BHASKAR RAO LED CITY POLICE DURING TOUGH TIMES

Outgoing police commissioner Bhaskar Rao has successfully steered the City through various law and order crises, beginning with the protests against the CAA and NRC. Even as the protests were raging, the Covid lockdown was announced in March. After some initial incidents of cops roughing up service and delivery agents during the lockdown, the city police in no time started issuing online passes for distribution of essentials. They helped BBMP officials, voluntary organisations and individuals distribute rations and meals to migrant workers, and also helped them get back to their hometowns.

KARNATAKA COVID-19 BATTLE



35 staffers at Mysuru Airport test +ve
Doctors' task force in Dakshina Kannada to train people at ward and GP-levels in capacity building
27 private hospitals in Koppal district told to provide 50% of beds for Covid cases
MORE ON PAGE 4

No pageantry on Independence Day, no public celebration of festivals this yr

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

THERE will be no revelry, no pomp and show or even the magnificence of the military parades when Bengaluru celebrates Independence Day this year. That's not all. Bakrid and Gowri-Ganesha festivals will have to be private affairs.

With Covid-19 cases continuing to rise, and in keeping with the Central government's

guidelines on Unlock-3, the parade and cultural programmes have been suspended, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Commissioner N Manjunatha Prasad declared on Friday.

Since the Central and State government guidelines clearly state that no social, religious or public gatherings are permitted, it has been decided that the Independence Day event will not exceed 45 minutes and at-



The Independence Day celebrations this year will be a muted affair.

tendance to the event will not be more than 100 people. Also, citizens will not be allowed to participate, Prasad said.

Usually, around 5,000 children participate in cultural programmes apart from police bands and contingents. But this year, none of that will be on show.

The hoisting of the National Flag will be followed by singing of the National and State anthems, a farmers' song, two pa-

triotic songs and the Chief Minister's speech, Prasad pointed out.

Participants at this year's event include 25 Covid-19 warriors, recovered patients, some officials and elected representatives, instead of the usual 16,000 invitees. There will be no shower of flower petals from a helicopter during the flag-hoisting this year.

He added that all those participating will be subject to rap-

id antigen test and screened for oxygen levels and temperature. The event will start at 9 am and conclude within 45 minutes. Entry without masks will not be permitted and physical distancing will have to be followed.

The Commissioner also said that this year, gatherings and public celebrations for Bakrid and Gowri-Ganesha festivals will be prohibited.

CONTINUED ON: P2